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Rostow's Firing Won't Affect Talks On Arms Control, CIA Official Says

By Dave Flessner
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President Reagan's dismissal of arms control negotiator Eugene V. Rostow will not alter the United States' negotiations with the Soviet Union on limiting medium-range missiles in Europe and reducing American and Soviet strategic weapons, a military intelligence officer said here Thursday.

"I don't think Mr. Rostow's removal will have much of an effect on our arms control talks," U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Edward A. Burkhalter Jr. told reporters following a luncheon speech to the Chattanooga Rotary Club. "Our two principal leaders (Gen. Edward Rowny and Ambassador Paul Nitze) are still in place and I have a great deal of respect and confidence in these gentlemen. It's clear that Secretary (of State George) Shultz is the president's principal architect of arms control policy, and that's as it should be."

In the current negotiations with the Soviets on reducing missiles in Europe, Nitze has indicated the United States will deploy a new generation of missiles to counter Russia's SS-20 missiles, which Burkhalter called "the most destabilizing force in Europe today."

Burkhalter, who is arms control director for the Central Intelligence Agency, said the Soviet buildup in Eastern Europe and "adventurism throughout the Third World" underscore the communist nation's "single-minded and consistent

path taken over the past 18 years to achieve dominance throughout the world."

The recent election of Yuri V. Andropov as Soviet leader has not altered the Soviet's military commitment, Burkhalter said.

"The Soviet leadership really hasn't changed very much," he said. "The hierarchy that brought Andropov to power is the same hierarchy that brought Mr. Brezhnev to power and they serve the same constituency."

Burkhalter said Andropov's recent offers to dismantle much of the Warsaw Pact nations' missiles in exchange for arms reductions by Western nations "are nothing new" and are intended to divide the United States from its Western allies.

"You have to be very careful in reviewing any new proposal Mr. Andropov may be making," he said. "We have to make sure any agreements we make are not only equitable, but verifiable."

Burkhalter said that during the 1970s, "we clearly let our own defense spending drop behind," requiring the massive military buildup proposed by President Reagan.

"The administration's concentration on strengthening our military is for good reason," he said. "The threat to us from the Soviets today is one of the greatest in our 200-year history."

Burkhalter said the Soviet Union now spends from 12 to 14 percent of its gross national product on defense, more than twice the level of the United States. And despite Russia's deteriorating economic conditions, Roscow said, "We've seen no evidence of a slackening in their military buildup."

"Clearly, they have used their own military power to expand into other parts of the world to win friends while trying to divide the West," he said. They've moved into areas deserted by the British and French in Africa and the Middle East. And they've taken advantage of political unrest and turmoil to move into the countries closer to us in

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